

# **YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM**

**2009 ANNUAL REPORT**

**Missouri Department of Economic Development**



# **YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR 2009**

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The Youth Opportunities Program (YOP) is authorized to allocate up to \$6 million in tax credits per calendar year for projects that target Missouri's at-risk youth. Through the 2009 application cycle, YOP allocated a total of \$6 million in tax credits to 43 youth projects throughout the state. Contributions to these projects will fund programming for 40 youth service projects, the construction of one new facility, and the renovation and/or expansion of two facilities. A 2009 project list is enclosed.

Approved 2009 projects have the potential to generate \$12 million in contributions, leveraging approximately \$6 million in private sector dollars. Since its inception in 1997, YOP has raised \$92,388,892 in contributions for projects focused on serving Missouri's youth.

YOP primarily partners with non-profits that work in their communities to develop and implement projects and services for at-risk youth. Non-profits team up with the Youth Opportunities Program to leverage private dollars to fund projects that meet this goal. These programs help youth overcome their current circumstances and realize their potential as productive citizens. YOP is an incentive for non-profits to provide specialized programming for disadvantaged youth who would otherwise not have such opportunities.

In 1998, the Youth Opportunities Program adopted seven program outcomes as a means to measure and verify the impact the program is having throughout the state. Those project outcomes focused on the following areas: youth will remain in school; obtain high school diplomas or earn GEDs; participate in internships and employment training; learn conflict resolution techniques; abstain from drugs and alcohol and pregnancy prevention. In 2009, outcomes were revised to give priority to the following five areas of impact:

- 1. Increase the number of at-risk youth that receive a high school diploma.**
- 2. Increase the number of at-risk youth that receive a GED.**
- 3. Increase the number of at-risk youth that remain in school and earn course credit(s) toward a diploma.**
- 4. Reduce the number of at-risk youth committing crimes and violent acts.**
- 5. Increase the number of at-risk youth that have completed an employment skills education and development program.**

Table 1.1 (below) shows the amount of tax credits redeemed to date and reflects the true cost to the State for the outcomes achieved in Table 1.2. Taxpayers have the tax year in which they made a contribution, plus five succeeding tax years to redeem their tax credits.

**Table 1.1: Tax Credit Utilization**

	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Credits Authorized To Date<sup>1</sup></b>	\$5,470,648	\$5,995,479	\$6,000,000
<b>Credits Issued To Date<sup>2</sup></b>	\$4,383,458	\$3,980,222	\$905,715
<b>Credits Redeemed To Date<sup>3</sup></b>	\$3,458,637	\$2,396,957	\$20,762

<sup>1</sup> Credits Authorized = Total Amount Authorized each calendar year minus recaptured, as of 12/31/2009.

<sup>2</sup> Credits Issued = Total Credits issued as of 12/31/2009 for the projects authorized in each calendar year.

<sup>3</sup> Credits Redeemed = Total Credits that have been redeemed by contributing taxpayers as of 12/31/2009 for Contributions made to projects authorized in each year.

YOP projects that ended and were closed from 2007-2009 have reported the following results under each of the program outcomes (Table 1.2). The numbers are the totals to date for the projects that ended in each year. The outcome totals fluctuate from year to year due to varying project time frames and the types of projects funded each year. Some numbers may include duplicated youth if the youth participate in the program more than one year or if they achieved more than one outcome.

**Table 1.2: Outcomes Achieved**

	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b># of Jobs Retained and New</b>	470	355	219
<b># Earning High School Diploma or GED</b>	6,684	281	433
<b># Earning School Credits/ Improving GPA</b>	8,246	3,338	25,924
<b># Not Committing Crimes &amp;/or completing Violence Prevention Courses</b>	7,593	2,646	9,345
<b># Abstaining from Drug &amp; Alcohol Use &amp; completing Prevention Programs</b>	13,151	2,517	4,567
<b># Completing Life Skills Training/Mentoring</b>	1,227	469	3,379
<b># Learning Employment Skills/Job Placement</b>	891	735	1,455
<b># Increasing Knowledge in Science, Math, Business</b>	287	27,192	288
<b># Achieving Other Outcomes</b>	2,711	2,997	5,822

As shown by the outcome data above, numerous projects are fighting disadvantage and successfully helping youth become more productive adults with YOP tax credits as a tool. Epworth Children & Family Services and Synergy Services, Inc. are two such projects. With YOP, these organizations are contributing in a very real way to meet the needs of disadvantaged

youth in our communities. The following summaries demonstrate the ways in which Epworth and Synergy Services are making positive, lasting differences in the lives of Missouri's youth.

Approved for a two year project, Epworth Children & Family Services has utilized YOP tax credits to provide therapeutic and recreational therapy services to more than 900 at-risk children living in the St. Louis area. The children served by this YOP project receive services through Epworth's Youth Emergency Service (YES) program, live in Epworth's residential treatment center, and/or receive Special Education Services. To children in these programs, Epworth provides services to more than 500 at-risk youth throughout St. Louis annually.

The YES program is Epworth's crisis care program and emergency shelter. Short-term housing and therapeutic support are provided for young people who need an immediate safe place to live because of abuse, neglect, homelessness or family conflict. YES is open 24/7 year round and can be reached through an emergency helpline to assist families and teens in crisis.



Epworth's residential center provides services to children ages 11 to 18, who are experiencing an emotional, mental or behavioral crisis. Children receive 24-hour structured supervision, therapy, recreational opportunities, medical care, and support.

Epworth provides special education services for children, ages 7 to 21, who have been diagnosed with severe learning disabilities, emotional disorders and/or

behavioral disorders. The program is often considered the "last resort" in attaining educational goals for many children, integrating intensive therapy services with academic studies, vocational training, and life skills development to prevent academic failure.

Epworth's YOP performance targets for the project include:

- 625 of 725 at-risk youth receiving counseling services will remain in school and earn credits toward their diploma.
- 158 of 175 at-risk youth receiving residential treatment services will not be involved in criminal behavior.
- 81 of 84 female youth receiving residential treatment services will not become pregnant.
- 433 of 475 youth receiving residential treatment or emergency shelter will complete drug and alcohol awareness education.

Synergy Services, Inc., a Kansas City nonprofit, is also successfully participating in the YOP program. With the aid of YOP tax credits, the nonprofit has constructed a new homeless youth campus, featuring an 8,000 square foot homeless youth shelter and comprehensive Youth Resiliency Center. The facilities offer basic services like showers, lockers, and access to a kitchen, as well as mental health counseling, medical and dental care, a computer lab, an interactive learning center and the opportunity for leadership development and community service. Youth receiving shelter at Synergy House will also participate in Synergy's employment development and life skills programs.

More than 2,000 young people are homeless each night in Kansas City. Many are abused and neglected teenagers who have either run away from home or been kicked out by their families. Synergy's goal is to help as many as these struggling teens as possible. Synergy's expanded facilities will enable the agency to double the number of homeless youth sheltered annually and will create ten new jobs.



Synergy Services performance targets include:

- 500 homeless youth, aged 12-18 years, will receive shelter, educational, social, and counseling services annually.
- 450 of 500 homeless youth receiving services will successfully complete Synergy's EXCEL life skills program annually.
- 450 of 500 youth participating in individual and/or group counseling will demonstrate improved mental health functioning and a reduction in indicators of depression and anxiety.
- 450 of 500 homeless youth receiving shelter will receive an education assessment, educational planning assistance, classroom instruction and/or tutoring. As needed, youth will be connected with Synergy's GED program.
- 10 new full-time professional positions will be created as a result of the construction of the new youth shelter and program expansion.
- Synergy's 8,000 square foot Homeless Youth Shelter, adjacent to the new Youth Resources Center includes 12 double rooms, a library and computer room, a classroom, counseling rooms, and a 24-hour hot-line center.

## Youth Opportunities Program - 2009 Project List

Organization Name	Authorized Amount	Total Credits Issued
A Million Stars	\$190,575.00	\$19,500.00
Aim High St. Louis	\$154,088.00	\$8,712.00
America Scores St. Louis	\$100,000.00	\$0.00
Big Brothers Big Sisters Of Central Missouri	\$85,000.00	\$2,000.00
Big Brothers Big Sisters Of Eastern Missouri	\$197,128.00	\$55,350.00
Big Brothers Big Sisters Of The Ozarks	\$31,477.00	\$6,447.00
Boys & Girls Club Of Springfield, Inc.	\$237,800.00	\$84,600.00
Boys And Girls Club Of Joplin, Mo	\$25,000.00	\$600.00
Boys And Girls Club Of The Columbia Area	\$182,613.00	\$48,917.00
Boys And Girls Clubs Of Greater Kansas City	\$161,526.00	\$11,760.00
Boys Town Of Missouri, Inc.	\$250,000.00	\$40,033.00
Child Advocacy Center, Inc.	\$214,604.00	\$5,000.00
Coca-Center Of Creative Arts	\$174,934.00	\$31,000.00
Covenant House Missouri	\$203,234.00	\$8,050.00
Crider Health Center	\$10,000.00	\$0.00
Evangelical Children's Home	\$200,466.00	\$34,706.00
Good Samaritan Boys Ranch	\$250,000.00	\$12,500.00
Good Shepherd Children & Family	\$100,000.00	\$0.00
Jess, Inc.	\$69,005.00	\$1,500.00
Junior Achievement Of Mississippi Valley	\$199,577.00	\$26,800.00
Kingdom House	\$186,621.00	\$83,941.00
Leggett & Platt Machine Products	\$52,093.00	\$0.00
Lift For Life Gym, Inc.	\$68,196.00	\$0.00
Lutheran Family & Children's Services Of Missouri	\$195,898.00	\$31,496.00
Metropolitan Organization To Counter Sexual Assault	\$25,000.00	\$0.00
Niles Home For Children	\$121,350.00	\$0.00
Nurses For Newborns Foundation	\$70,000.00	\$0.00
Ozanam	\$70,276.00	\$5,250.00
Presbyterian Children's Service	\$244,324.00	\$27,875.00
Progressive Youth Connection	\$25,205.00	\$8,500.00
Rose Brooks Center, Inc.	\$150,000.00	\$750.00
St. Joseph Institute For The Deaf	\$84,706.00	\$7,500.00
St. Louis Children's Hospital	\$35,000.00	\$0.00
St. Louis Internship Program	\$67,886.00	\$3,250.00
St. Louis Science Center	\$241,328.00	\$2,500.00
St. Patrick Center	\$168,845.00	\$20,645.00
Teach For America	\$200,000.00	\$35,129.00
The Children's Home Society Of Missouri	\$30,266.00	\$6,982.00
Variety The Children's Charity Of St. Louis, Inc.	\$145,308.00	\$20,000.00
Voices For Children (Formerly St. Louis City Casa)	\$198,914.00	\$3,500.00
Wyman Center, Inc.	\$245,683.00	\$5,000.00
Youth First Corporate	\$62,425.00	\$7,625.00
Youth In Need, Inc.	\$200,000.00	\$32,579.00